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# The Spark, Volume 1 Issue 2

Connecticut College

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# THE SPARK

Nov 2 1977

## Student evaluations— Is anybody listening?

BOB ADLER

In any imperfect system, some form of feedback must be made available, and regularly consulted, if one hopes to effectively improve the situation. To facilitate student feedback at Conn., various faculty and course evaluation formats have been employed.

Last year, a faculty-designed (and approved) questionnaire was given to each student. This year, the Student Advisory Committee (S.A.C.), of each department will devise an additional questionnaire and distribute it to all students taking courses in the department. This is not to say that there will be a duplication of effort between student and faculty designed surveys. Each questionnaire was designed for a slightly different purpose and will serve as the feedback mechanism for a different bureaucratic channel.

The college-wide faculty-questionnaire consists of four sections (departmental supplements may be included). Part I deals with information concerning the student. In Part II ratings which range from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5), are requested in regard to the course's equity, and its contribution to the student's education. Part III evaluates the instructor's competence, using the same rating scale. Lastly, in Part IV space is provided for written comments to the instructor.

On the whole, this is a good survey. Not only do the questions provide an opportunity for comprehensive evaluation of both teacher and course but also enable standardized replies to be obtained.

After the questionnaires are collected, Part IV is placed in an envelope and given to the instructor for inspection. The rest of the

questionnaire is sealed and sent to the Dean of the Faculty. Here the results are compiled and evaluated.

As is typical of many bureaucratic processes, last year's results have yet to be tabulated. Quite obviously, these faculty-questionnaires cannot have affected this year's course offerings or instructor assignments. Furthermore, according to the Dean of the Faculty, the evaluations obtained from the three initial semesters' questionnaires will not be consulted. Instead, they will be used to determine the validity of the responses (e.g. whether a student's response is self-consistent or sincere). It is only after this 3-semester foundation has been established that the faculty-questionnaire will receive any of its efficacy.

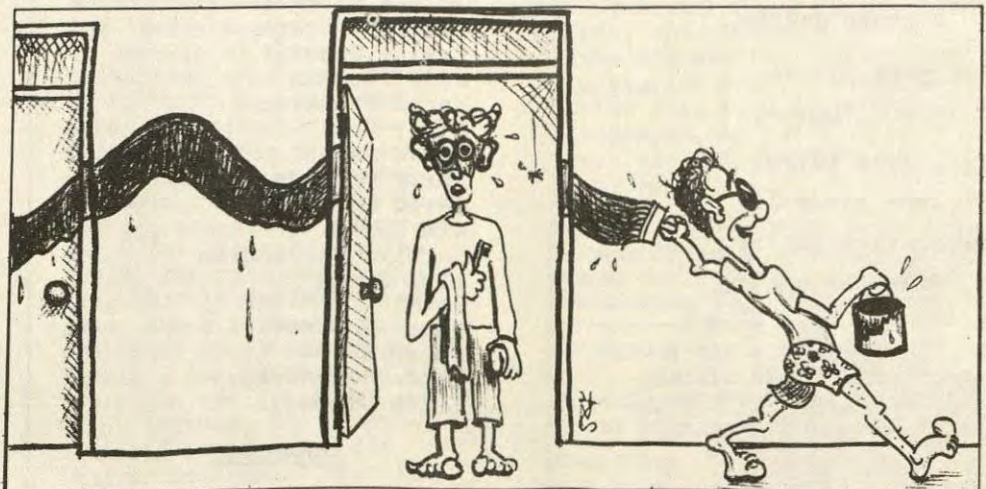
Once the results have been tabulated and validated, the teacher evaluations will be used (along with three or four other considerations) to determine who on the faculty shall be hired, fired, promoted or given tenure. One may assume that the course information obtained by the questionnaire aids each department in their proposal selections. However, no mention was made of this

in the faculty handbook.

This brings us to Student Advisory Committees and their new questionnaires. The purpose of the various committees is to "transmit" to the faculty of its department "the student point of view on curriculum, staff appointments and promotions, and other matters of common interest." The S.A.C., comprised of 6-9 majors, are required to meet with their faculty counterparts a minimum of twice a year. At least one meeting is designated for "discussion of educational policy, course offerings and long range planning of the curriculum...". In addition, the S.A.C. must schedule a semesterly consultation "...with all other majors and interested students taking courses in the department."

This year's S.A.C. were chosen in mid-October. After they organize, each committee draws up a questionnaire in consultation with faculty members of the department. "Solely on the basis of this questionnaire the committee shall make an annual evaluation of the teaching competence of every member of the department..." Any member who disagrees with

**Continued on page 5**



**Wake up to wall art**

**(story inside)**



# Illusions

When Aldous Huxley wrote "Brave New World" he was trying to tell us something. Even when, on the surface, life appears pleasant and harmonious, basic principles of right and wrong may still be violated.

And thus it appears at Connecticut College. "How could you criticize life here?", many students may ask. And indeed, when one walks around campus on a beautiful fall day, all does seem "right with the world".

The problem is, that we have been lulled to sleep by our surroundings. The college gives us a field to play flag football on, and we consider ourselves fortunate.

There are too many wrongs which we simply accept as our fate. Students often choose two courses during registration period, and then make a desperate and futile effort to find other interesting subjects. We sit in classrooms, bored more often than not; never making the effort to reshape our education into something interesting and relevant.

Crozier-Williams stands as a "shining" example of the lack of administrative concern for student needs. The people who make the decisions in this school, don't live on campus; five o'clock arrives, and they leave. They have no need for a Student Center, and thus the student body is left with little in the way of non-academic resources.

It's time we students opened our eyes and raised our voices against the way decisions are made in this school. Connecticut College exists for students, and, to a great extent, is funded by us. And yet, we shrink away from openly criticizing existing institutions, and instead resort to grumbling and complaining among ourselves.

The question is not, can we change things? We can. The question is, are we willing to make the effort? For once, let's look beyond grade point averages, and the petty differences we might have among ourselves. By working together we can better our educational and social environment. It is well worth the fight.

# LETTERS

To the Editor:

Whom (with an m) do you think you're kidding? You promised us an editorial newspaper of superior journalism. I find myself disappointed. As a matriculated student at Conn., or as house president of Branford, I was personally insulted by your paper. Contrary to your belief, I am not opposed to freedom of the press. I'm certainly all for it. But I do believe in setting respectable standards. There is no need to be disrespectful or rude when presenting a point. Opinions are only effective when stated in a mature, responsible manner. Being slanderous is being unprofessional.

It is the duty of an editor to assure high quality journalism. He should watch out for such elements as taking quotes out of context, only using one source as a reference, and articles which change subjects midstream, coming to no conclusions. As a specific example; I wish you had come to me, also, before writing of the Branford dorm meeting. Firstly, dorm meetings are not usually advertised to

outside people and secondly, our meeting, which concerned the funding of the newspapers was not a "joke" in the opinion of the majority of the dorm. It was well attended and taken most seriously. It would have been better journalism to seek this other side.

I am not criticizing your format or your intentions. Continue to Spark an interest and shed new light on aspects of life we wouldn't consider without the push. But please, do so in the name of journalism, not spite.

STEPHANIE PICK

## THE SPARK

### Volume One/ Issue Two

Wednesday, November 2, 1977

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The Spark is a non-profit organization with offices located in the Chapel boiler room. Our mailing address is

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ED.- The articles which are written by The Spark are never done out of spite or personal dislike. To criticize a person for the manner in which he carries out his official functions, is not



a personal criticism.

There seems to be a somewhat critical feeling among members of the Student Government Association, concerning the manner in which quotes from S.G.A. meetings were incorporated in Spark articles. The entire meeting from which our "S.G.A. versus free press" article was taken, was taped. Thus the quotes are accurate and not distorted in any manner.

There were numerous quotes from that meeting, which could have been used to indicate an "anti free press" bias on the side of the S.G.A. Somewhere along the line, some discretion had to be used, or else the article would simply have dissolved into a recording of minutes from that meeting.

The Spark stands firm in its position that the quotes which were used in our article were indicative of what the general attitude of the S.G.A. was at that time. However the fact that Stephanie Pick's letter is printed above, indicates that we are more than willing to print opposing viewpoints.

To the Editor:

Responsible journalism is dead on this campus, and the corpse can only be laid at the door of The Spark. Fortunately, the students are intelligent enough to recognize the difference between thoughtful, constructive comment and the absurd insinuations that appeared in your article "SGA Versus Free Press." A responsible newspaper would not print quotes out of context, unprofessional psychological judgements attributed to large groups, or vicious personal attack as ridiculous as it was unsubstantiated. It was obvious that the whole purpose of this "editorial" was to turn the student body against Student Assembly. Trying to get a little student interest in what's going on is great, but when it is done by a misrepresentation of the real issues, it is irresponsible. Your failure to mention the financial crisis in the Student Organization budget, the root of the problem, shows that you made no attempt to explain the issues at hand. Student

Assembly is not against free press. The fact of the matter is that free press is simply not the issue here. Money is. Somehow the two newspapers got it into their heads that they have a God-given right to print whatever they want with Student Money. Any paper funded with student money has a responsibility to print relevant student news. SGA news included. Neither paper would promise that it would fulfill this obligation. Student Assembly tried to make sure that the students were getting something for their money. Constructive criticism will always be welcomed by that body. It's rather ironic that by taking this position (SGA news is important, and should be included with other student news) we were treated to a front page article on SGA news. Try and clean it up next time.

One other point: The conditional funding of the two newspapers, which they find so abhorrent to the idea of free press, was not Student Assembly's idea but rather, it was the brainchild of David Stewart, editor-in-chief of The College Voice. Please be fair to him and don't print a front page editorial entitled: "Stewart versus Free Press."

ERIC SCHOENBERG

ED.- No Eric, the only thing that's died on this campus is the notion that student newspapers are merely an extension of the S.G.A. The Spark is responsible to the whole student body, not to the twenty-odd people who, as members of the S.G.A. think that they have a God-given right to have their every pronouncement disseminated among the students.

Furthermore, the issue has been freedom of the press and not money. The Spark has never put the blame on the S.G.A. for cuts in our budget. This is why our newspaper was a part of the coalition which sought to obtain a larger share of money for the S.G.A. to work with. Instead, our concern centered around what the Student Government Association was insisting the newspapers do, in order to receive their funds.

The impasse between the S.G.A. and the newspapers did not concern Student Government news. From the beginning, The Spark claimed that it would print all relevant S.G.A. news. Thus, in our first issue, the article on pre-registration was a direct result of "news" occurring at a Student Government meeting. The confrontation between The College Voice, The Spark and the S.G.A. revolved not around the question of Student Government News, but rather that of S.G.A. platforms. The Student Government Association insisted that if the newspapers were to receive funds, we had to print political platforms. At this point, the newspapers balked, claiming that the S.G.A. had no right to tell us what we had to print. Ultimately, what the Student Government Association was interested in was not news which was relevant to the student body, but rather news which was relevant and helpful to itself.

Addressing Mr. Schoenberg's last point, The Spark has always insisted that the notion of semester funding was shabby, and a direct violation of freedom of the press. (The funds for second semester are there, they have simply been frozen for the present time). Mr. Stewart is not a member of The Spark, nor does he speak for our organization; and Mr. Schoenberg knows this. Furthermore, the final decision on semester funding lies not with Dave Stewart, but with the S.G.A. But rather than admit to the reality of the situation, Mr. Schoenberg is content to shift the blame and try to deny responsibility.

You were right in one case Eric, the student body is intelligent. Intelligent enough to realize that the only thing worse than an S.G.A. with bad judgement, is one that won't even admit to the decisions they make.

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## Still more letters

To the Editor:

Congratulations to you and the staff on the first issue of The Spark. You are all to be commended on the high quality of the articles (particularly their variety and depth), the layout, and the mix of fiction and nonfiction.

I am sure some of your editorial comment will "spark" controversy, and that is as it should be in an alternative newspaper. Your willingness to comment bluntly on matters important to everyone at the College is refreshing. Good luck and, again, congratulations. I look forward to the next issue.

ART FERRARI  
Professor of  
Sociology

To the Editor:

Concerning your article entitled "SGA versus free press"; I feel that it is about time someone on this campus stood up for an ideal in which they believed. That ideal is a free press, and, in my opinion, the SGA has been oppressing it. The major point brought up by The Spark, and totally ignored by the SGA, is that no paper can exist on this campus without SGA funds. There is just not enough money in either advertisements (without a huge New London circulation) or in sponsorships. Therefore, to have any type of press at all, whether it be an

informative paper or an editorial magazine, funds must be made available by the SGA. The Student Government Association's dictation of what is to be included in any paper, (such as printing SGA platforms or demanding that SGA news be printed), as well as the idea of a trial basis on which to judge how well a paper is living up to the SGA's standards, cannot be tolerated.

Holding funds over a paper's head as a means of controlling its content is a direct violation of the First Amendment. It is up to both the students and the SGA to change their image and function into a viable government. The Spark is attempting to stir up involvement to aid these necessary changes. I sincerely hope that funds are not cut off before this is accomplished.

DONALD F. GOLDBERG

To the Editor:

I have heard a lot of talk, concerning your paper, since the publication of your first, and somewhat controversial, issue. There has also been, as you well know, an anonymously written satire of your paper, entitled "the Dying Ember".

Concerning your article on the SGA, I feel that a major mistake in reasoning committed by the SGA, is that they seem to feel that you are spending their money. I object to the fact

that the Student Government Association acts as if the money is theirs' to spend. Each of us pays a student activity fee, and we are not giving that money to the SGA. Rather that money is to be utilized for what the student body, as a whole, wants. It's not up to the SGA to spend our money entirely in their own interests, and low voter turnouts have shown that the students don't feel that the SGA relates to them. An alternative newspaper is of great necessity on this campus; and to have that creativity stifled by an economic dictatorship is blatantly unfair.

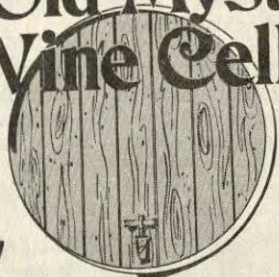
Calling your paper irresponsible is selfish. Everyone on this campus can't possibly agree, totally, on the manner in which things should be run. Just because a paper prints a criticism of SGA's procedures, does not make it irresponsible. As long as responding letters are invited and all articles are signed, the paper is responsible. "The Dying Ember" met neither of these criteria, but still its publication shouldn't be stifled. For the freedom to have all viewpoints represented is of intrinsic value in itself.

In my opinion, it is the function of the press to stimulate its readership, and to raise a diversity of issues. The Spark has done that successfully, and thus I feel that it, and The College Voice, should be allocated the necessary funds.

JACK WADE

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# Student evaluations continued

a report may attach a minority view. The results are forwarded to the department chairmen. These reports "shall become a permanent part of the personal file on the instructor and the questionnaires shall become his or her personal property."

Although the exact nature of a typical S.A.C. survey was undeterminable, it seems that their efficacy was questionable. It appears, however, that the informal opinion of the S.A.C. ("transmitted" at mandatory meetings and during unofficial exchanges) does have an impact. This is the source which provides the majority of a department's feedback. Both department chairmen and S.A.C. members felt that, in general, S.A.C. percepts are sought after and valued.

In fact, a member of last year's S.A.C. attributes most of the impotence in the feedback system to the wide-spread lack of student concern. As far as this member was concerned, the channels between faculty and S.A.C. were open and active. It was student input which was lacking. Nevertheless, no one in that S.A.C. thought to tap student sentiment with a survey. Hopefully, this year's required questionnaire will infuse the needed consensus.

The creation of Conn's curriculum starts every year when each chairman submits a list of his/her department's proposed course offerings and teacher assignments, to a representative of the faculty. (In this case he would be the Secretary of the Faculty, Mr. Churchill). The Secretary in turn, "transmits all such proposals to the faculty...."who vote on them at a general meeting. A course which receives at least two-thirds of the vote is authorized. Those that fail are remanded to the Academic and Administrative Procedures Committee for consideration. The AcAd-ProCo is comprised of the Dean of the Faculty, six faculty members and three students. According to the Dean of the Faculty, the faculty vote is a mere formality. On the average, only

one course per semester is remanded. For all intents and purposes, the courses proposed by the chairmen are those offered to the students.

Though there is good communication between the department and their S.A.C., the chairman is not required to consult either of the two questionnaire evaluations. What then, are the criteria for course/prof offerings based on? Since there is no unified official policy, the criteria varies from department to department. However, it is usually departmental logistics which dominate the decision. Proposals are generally the result of an effort to balance: 1) the availability of a teacher, with 2) his/her area of expertise, and 3) the necessity of providing for the requirements of the major. As might be imagined, the larger departments have greater flexibility. Hence they have less difficulty in fulfilling the scheduling parameters. This enables them to pay greater attention to student opinion (as transmitted by the S.A.C.). Nevertheless, student evaluation of the course/prof has a less than significant effect on who and what is offered to the students.

As we have seen, it is the Chairman's selection of which courses are to be proposed to the faculty, that is the crucial step in the actualization process. Thus faculty politics has a direct influence on the curriculum offered to us. If

naire is in temporary-limbo. It is also true that as soon as valid means are provided for making student opinion available, their effectiveness is undermined. Insufficient time is allotted for the completion of the questionnaires. How accurate can your answers be, given ten minutes at the end of class? How thoughtful are your comments to the instructor? How ridiculous is this self-defeating procedure? More time is definitely required. Far more serious are the stipulations placed on the application of questionnaire results. Feedback must be consulted if it is going to have any effect. Unfortunately the evaluations are employed under limited conditions. They are simply not "required reading" when it comes to the matter of course proposals and faculty assignment. Officially, the Faculty-questionnaire affects the prof's position. It has little bearing on who teaches what. And for all of the S.A.C.'s informal influence, the department chairmen are not required to consult the evaluations before deciding on their curriculum proposals.

Obviously, the entire feedback system would be strengthened if the faculty vote was taken a little more seriously. The faculty should be required to consult the evaluations when considering course proposals. The same goes for department chairmen.

Generally, new procedures should be instituted which guarantee that genuine student opinion is used as a

## ... student evaluation has a less than significant effect on who and what is offered to the students.

a member of the department possesses enough power, or is sufficiently enthusiastic about teaching such and such course, the less adamant will often oblige the other's wishes. In this manner, an instructor's personal desires will, on occasion, supplant obvious student discontent, and a poorly received course is pushed through proposal and into authorization.

The potential for an accurate reflection of student sentiment exists. Unfortunately, the Faculty-question-

naire guideline in those deliberations concerning proffered curriculum. This would require a change in official college policy. No doubt this will not happen overnight. But keep in mind that a good opinion-collection system already exists.

Inevitably, you are privileged to undertake at least one course which provides little besides frustration. I'm sorry to say there is indication that your cries of mental anguish go largely unheeded when channelled through standard recourse.



# Pleasure island

SCOTT CALAMAR

Nestled among the train tracks and swamps northeast of the campus proper is a land mass called Mamacoke Island. Last week I told you the true, oft-hidden story of Palmer Library. I did not intend to make "Fabled Foundations" a series, but upon researching the Palmer story, I came across a legend that has long been suppressed but should be known by all Conn. students.

Judging from the movements of the geographical plates (this was before the other utensils, e.g. forks, knives, and spoons came into use) scientists have concluded that Mamacoke Island was not only not an original part of Connecticut College, but had little to do with Connecticut America or even the North-western Hemisphere. Let me explain this in case you do not get my continental drift.

According to the world renowned geologist, Afrendes P. Marthius, what we know as Mamacoke Island was at one time a neighboring island of New Guinea, known by its inhabiting tribes as Cokemama Isle. Supposedly the Cokemama & Papas were a hedonist people.<sup>1</sup> There are many legends written about them, but for the definitive one I did my homework and got in touch with an anthropologist who specialized in hedonist tribes (and is also the only illegitimate child of Louis Leaky and Margaret Mead), Rod. Young Rod Leaky researched this subject in his paper "Mamacoke or Pepsi?" and the following is an abridgement of his work.

The natives of Cokemama Island were a pleasure loving people. They indulged in such hard drugs as marihuana, peyote, and knochwurst with chili. They were especially fond of cocaine, so much, in fact, that their island name was a loose translation (ever heard of a tight one?) of "Between the Lines." Originally part of the New Guinea Empire, the natives forsook their Italian heritage and became an independent island. The official name of the island was changed from Beyond New Guinea to Cokemama after the traditional island greeting,

"Wanna buy some coke, mama?"

It was the earthquake of 43 B.C. (at that time called the Quake and Bake of 1622 I.U.D.) that sent the little island reeling around the world. It has never been confirmed that the quake was started by the simultaneous sneezes of the island natives after the traditional religious sinus sacrifice, but Young Rod Leaky suspects that was the case.

In 58 B.C. the Cokemamas & Papas realized that their island had, for some time, been slowly moving away from New Guinea because the phone rates on interisland calls

## They indulged in such hard drugs as marihuana, peyote and knochwurst with chili.

had shot up, even when dialed without operator assistance. This caused great panic on the little island. Many jumped overboard and some hid in the pouches of marsupials. A few even took to religion and prayed to a god who can only be compared to our present day Truman Capote. They took to walking around in funny hats and developed a dialect unlike anything previously heard in their part of the world (although they couldn't quite figure out where that was). The Chief Head of Cokemama, under a great deal of political pressure, declared a holiday that would not end until the island found a new home.

For fourteen hundred years the little island cruised around the world. The marsupials passed into extinction due to climatic changes and the natives were left pouchless. The traditional hallucinatory herbs grew weaker and weaker and then disappeared. They, too, seemed doomed to extinction.

It was in 1498 that the island found its way up the Thames and to the spot where it now rests. When the natives discovered this, they rejoiced and once again could enjoy marmalade with a clear conscience. The Chief Head at that time, Uneetabonga, declared their extended holiday over and set the people back

to work raising herbs. They grew so much weed that they used it for their houses.

It is at this point that our story becomes confused due to a near sighted marine biologist by the name of Connie Lingus. Ms. Lingus was looking for a rare breed of water creature which was soon to become extinct, the contraceptive jelly fish (so called because of its inability to reproduce), when she stumbled upon the island.

Meeting a native, she was startled when asked the traditional question (which lacked character due to the years at sea), "Got some coke

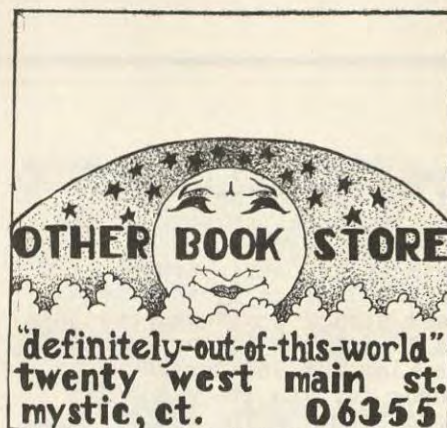
mama?" Confused, she asked what island she was on. "Coke, mama. Mama, coke, mama, coke" the natives repeated. She wrote this down in her journal. Noting the sleekness of the native women, Ms. Lingus entered the following in her journal: "Got my first look at the women. The natives are breastless." The phrase has been used ever since, though often misquoted.

Perhaps the most mistaken belief is that the Cokemamas & Papas were head hunters. This drastic misconception was brought about by two instances. First, in the tradition of Emily Post, the natives decided to befriend Ms. Lingus and told her they would love to have her for dinner. Obviously she took this too literally. The most tragic mistake, however, was made after dinner when the mints were being handed out. Inquiring about the natives' goal in life, Ms. Lingus was informed that they were "only looking for a good head." This is all we know of the intercourse between the natives and Ms. Lingus. She went on to become a nun in the Church of the Holy Dissatisfied.

According to Young Rod Leaky, the Cokemamas & Papas met their downfall during a religious celebration. Chief Uneetabonga had been partaking of herbs for three days



when he ran out. In his stupor, he thought it wise to just smoke a little of his house for that extra buzz. He should have known better than to use a kitchen match, for he accidentally set his hut aflame, a flame that overtook the island. Every person and animal on the island was burnt alive. This led Young Rod Leaky to observe, "People who live in grass houses should not get stoned." 2



Tune in and turn on to WCNI  
91.5 F.M. in New London

The Spark welcomes and encourages letters from its readers. Responsible letters should be sent to:

The Spark  
c/o Box 618  
Connecticut College  
New London, Ct.

## Save the preppies!

MARTY JOHNSON

Several weekends ago at the bar I was being verbally accosted by a young lady, who shall sadly remain nameless. After enduring countless snide remarks and dull chatter she made one final slash at me. "Oh God, Marty," she harped, "how can you be such a narrow minded preppie!" I queried, "What's a preppie - define preppie."

"Oh come on, you know what a preppie is - everyone does!"

Trying to act as innocent as possible I said, "Well, I don't. Please tell me what one is."

By now the girl was clearly very flustered. "Well ....well," she stammered, "oh forget it! If you don't know by now you're beyond all help!" With that she stumbled off spilling beer all over her Fair Isle sweater and wide wale corduroys.

The idea of what a preppie really is kept haunting me after that regretful experience in the bar; so I decided to discover the truth with paper and pencil in hand. I set out to find the answer to the ultimate question; what is a preppie? The answers I received from those I interviewed are factual but the names are withheld to protect the preppies.

I actually shouldn't print the remarks of my first interviewee. But I think you'll agree his grandiose opinions concerning preppies leads one to believe that somehow the prep schools of America are producing a new Aryan race. Number one definition is as follows: "Intellectual, well rounded, trained men and women who pride themselves on perfect-

ion. Often accused of dressing in a strange way by those who remain tasteless. Preppies run our government, (are Jimmy, Jody and Hamilton preppies?) manage Wall Street and fill essential professional positions in our society, leaving for those who cry discrimination mere token employment. Just ask C.Wright Mills what he meant by the power elite." Remember, this is a factual statement made by a student at this college, not Herman Gohering.

A young lady strolling across Harkness Green gave me the next definition: "Preppies are self defeating casanovas in boxer shorts. They have a great opener but after that they totally (expletive deleted) themselves over." Somehow I get the feeling that this young lady knows quite a bit more about preppies than most of us!

The next definition comes from a gentleman who seems to understand the psychology of preppiedom quite well. His words give us an insight into the function or possible malfunction of the preppie mind. "The prep's relation to the rest of the world is a love/hate sort of thing. He knows he's the best, yet he knows everyone else thinks he's a scumbag. The result: a tweed paranoid. Net result: greater exhibition of ones prep identity. Brighter colors, bizarre unisex clothing, fascinations with gold and silver, whales, alligators and tennis raquets. He becomes the ultimate prep because he knows that he must. He's caught on a treadmill that he'll never get off. He becomes - a Brooks Brothers junkie."

I was beginning to wonder if a preppie was solely a male phenomenon. The next definition I received confirms that a female mutation of the preppie species does exist. A particular young woman who admitted to being a former preppie explained the whereabouts of the female preppie mind. "There seems to be a trend toward utter naturalness and simplicity. This is apparent in the style of dress; clothes are simple and neutral, creating a mystique, possibly associated with menopause." If this is an accurate description of a female preppie (or is it preppetite?) I don't recall seeing any on this campus - or have I? Unless they're the ones people keep calling J.A.P.'s but then I don't know what those are either.

This last definition comes from someone I think I can trust. After rooming with him as a freshman I have learned to trust, and often distrust, his wit, wisdom and general worldly knowledge. "Face it Marty," he said, "preppies bend over for the soap."

Needless to say I now have a very distorted conception of preppies. Well, correct me if I'm wrong but, with the information I have recieved, a preppie appears to be a self-centered, neo-Nazi, somewhat mentally unstable, prematurely middle aged, latent homosexual who is bad in bed. Surely, this cant be, or can it?

Anyone wishing to help these poor souls should write:

SAVE THE PREPPIES  
10 Sutton Place  
New York, N.Y. 10019



# Theater space

KIM LEWIS

A small space, a small stage, a few wooden cubes and planks, a couple of flats, and a simple lighting system are all that is necessary in the understanding of the new theater in room 202 of Palmer Auditorium. This permanent set-up, including the modular scenery, has allowed the room to be easily used as both a performance and classroom space. Work on the conversion of the room is almost complete and so far this semester it has weathered two performances and regular classes without many difficulties.

The Theater department has long been in need of such a space. The size and complexity of the main stage in Palmer make it difficult to achieve intimacy with the audience and require the effort needed to mount a full and finished production. Other available areas such as Dana Hall, the large room in Thames, the chapel, or an empty dining room are not well suited to theatrical needs.

The T.V. studio (downstairs in Palmer) has been used for student productions in the years past but this year plans were made to use the space for video taping and otherwise leave it available as a makeup and dressing room for the main stage.

Palmer 202 was always used as a classroom space and, when necessary, for production rehearsals. Last spring Jonathan Goldman presented Ionesco's The Lesson in 202 and encountered many problems vying for time and finding that everything in the show had to be removed each night for classes the next day.

These problems and others increased the immediate need for a flexible theatrical space. The Theatre department also wished to encourage small scale productions or presentations and fill the needs of classes and class projects. 202 was chosen for adaption to meet these demands. There was little choice.

Ideas for the design and purpose in the conversion of 202 were conceived by

Fred Grimsey and Linda Herr of the Theater department. The technical aspects of the room were worked out by Grimsey and Chris Greene '77. Work was begun by them late last spring and continued this fall with the help of students working for Theater Services. Funds for the project have come from the budgets of Theater Studies as well as Theater Services and money has also been pledged by the Student Faculty Auction and the Senior Class.

The space is not quite complete (it lacks a few technical details) but is regularly in use. Classes now have constant use of a stage which is particularly advantageous to such things as the presentation of directing class projects at the end of the semester. Two productions have also utilized the room; they are the French department's presentation of Ionesco's The Bald Soprano and Mike Richard's production of Sitting. Had 202 not been converted, these productions might have gone elsewhere and might have had to settle for a less convenient or workable space.

A few complaints were voiced by members of the production Sitting about the yet incomplete set-up and against the strict rule that only the modular scenery and the space it stands in may be used. This rule, however is necessary, to the idea of a flexible performance/classroom space for it allows one type of area to easily be struck to accommodate the other. Everyone who has used 202 this year though agrees that a small theater space (202 seats 50-80 people) was needed, and that the conver-

sion has been successful on the whole.

Fred Grimsey has said that 202 should be considered a theater lab, not an experimental theater as it has been referred to at times. It is designed to help give greater opportunity to those wishing to do a small-scale production without the threat or the time-consuming effort involved in a large technical job. It is also very much like the dance studio, flexible enough to serve several functions.

An experimental, possibly a black box theater in the old Palmer Library would most ideally accommodate the present needs of the Theater department. 202 is a permanent set-up and must also be used as a classroom. In this sense it is still a somewhat restricted space. Its new design, however, is a step towards fulfilling the needs brought on by increased student interest and participation in theater at Conn. College.

The Spark is looking for interested and aware people. We need people who can write articles, take photographs, or do layouts.

If you would like to work for The Spark contact: Rich Goldin Box# 618.

COFFEE HOUSE- Friday, November 4th in Cro Main Lounge. Starring Dianne Argyris and Jack Wade.

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# Wall Art

STEVE FRERICHs

What is there to say about the dormitory walls on campus? They're just empty white stretches of plaster and cinder block, right? Wrong! While most of us have come to accept our barren surroundings as a fact of institutional existence, a few enterprising students persist in trying to breathe life into their environment by adorning the walls with bright colors, painted patterns and some marvelous murals. Naturally any such attempt to alter the established order of things meets with resistance. The school's policy has been to callously remove such decorations without regard to the time, labor and talent they represent, or to the contribution they make to the quality of dorm life. Yet in spite of the threat of destruction, wall art continues to pop up like mushrooms all over campus, proving that the irrepressible spirit of creativity can still be found at Conn.

What is the subject of student art on campus? Practically everything imaginable. An 'awesome' Spiderman clings to the Marshall stairwell, a Grateful Dead skeleton plays a violin in Larrabee basement and a sedate Egyptian god presides over the first floor of Freeman while Jimmy Cliff boogies upstairs. A

group of would-be Jackson Pollocks descended upon the second floor of J.A. next door. K.B.'s basement is brightened by a sun-face and a yin-yang symbol. The second floor is gloriously decked out in blue and red with murals being commissioned.

The Spark asked some of the artists why they were willing to spend so much time, effort and expensive paint on these projects. Bob Tankard blames booze, claiming he was toasted when he began his famous skeleton in Larrabee. Others put the blame on the walls themselves. Carl Frye III in J.A. retorted, "Look at these walls. They're all so white, so...boring!" Pam Goff, currently planning a mural in Marshall, stated that the walls in their present condition, "are not conducive to life." Others agreed, accusing the sterile atmosphere of inducing a sterility of mind. Painting is their answer.

Of course, the artists like their own stuff, but what about the other students who have to live next to these paintings? Dave McKillop in K.B. responded, "There's nothing better than this type of creativity. They ought to cover all these walls with murals." Recalling Burdick basement's lost murals, Lori Mead stated "Those were beautiful paintings; I can't believe they



Photo by Fishman

painted them over." The same sentiments prevailed everywhere...except in J.A. where even those involved in the production admitted that they were dissatisfied with the results. Nevertheless Carl Frye proclaimed the work as a "radical manifesto; a communal statement." Basically the question is one of taste. Eric Schoenburg asserted that the school's present policies protect us against the abuses of poor taste and vandalism. However, the artists are quick to distinguish their work from unsightly defacement.

Clearly, tastes will conflict, and not every effort at artistic expression can be expected to succeed. Yet this is no reason to dismiss all such efforts. The solution lies in discretion, not in branding every wall painting as vandalism. Surely there are better alternatives. For example, existing murals could be voted upon and be approved or rejected by the students in each dorm. Also, an avenue could be opened by which students planning future murals could seek official permission and rest assured that their work would be preserved.

The real issue here is not just the preservation of a few paintings, but encompasses the basic attitude of the school towards student life. Imagination and creativity are the lifeblood of any campus. These qualities are fostered through student expression, whether on the walls, in the newspapers, radio or wherever. It's time that those of us concerned with art, expression and the whole atmosphere at Conn. take action or reconcile ourselves to the dullness symbolized by blank white walls.



Photo by Fishman



# Adventures in Paradise

CAROLINE BOYCE

"There is nothing to do in New London."

"Townies are stupid."

"When I Think of New London, I think of leaving."

These limited views of New London were expressed by Conn. College students, and it would seem that similar views are held by the majority of students on campus. Most students know nothing more of the city than what can be seen between the College and Ocean's Pizza, an area which is admittedly rather dismal at first glance.

Connecticut College students are in the habit of isolating themselves from the outside community. From our first day on campus we are told that New London is awful and we immediately insulate ourselves from the horrors of the city. The campus becomes a world within itself and our perspective of the outside community, extending far beyond New London, becomes distorted. It is hard for us to imagine what a small, infinitesimal part of the world Connecticut College is, especially when everything on campus is made to seem so important.

So, here you are at Conn., stuck in the middle of a depressed, decrepit, and virtually defunct area. You are surrounded by the beauty of Bank Street, glorious Groton, The Bomb and the Boat, and the fumes from Pfizer. To top it off, the all-campus party this weekend will be exactly the same as the others you have attended in the past. So what are you going to do about it?

Well, New London does have its advantages. It is 3 1/2 hours from New York City, 2 hours from Boston, an hour from New Haven and 45 minutes from Hartford. But, before you take off for the bright lights and action in the big cities, give New London a chance.

Below are listed a few of the more obscure places in New London that might be of interest. First, however, there are two other aspects about New London that need to be stressed.

For anyone remotely interested in architecture and building design, New London

is a gold mine. The city has many beautiful buildings and homes, the facades of which may have intricate brickwork and stone and wood carvings. For example, one building on Bank Street has ship figureheads on its facade. The train station, designed by Henry Hobson Richardson is also a landmark worth noting. The rehabilitation program in New London has been making a marked effort to preserve things of historical value in the city. It is interesting to watch what they are doing.

In reference to the misconception that "townies" are stupid, no one, not even a Conn. student has the right to place themselves above everyone else. The majority of people in New London may not be "intellectuals" (as if we had the right to call ourselves that) but they have had experiences that many of us never had. For example, I met an old man in the Dutch Tavern one evening who claimed to have witnessed the last execution that took place in this state. I also spent an afternoon talking

to an old man who had come to this country from the Philippines as a stranger. His stories were fascinating and certainly these experiences are just as valuable to our education as anything learned in a classroom.

New London is not a big city, so for those students without cars, put on your walking shoes. The following is a list of places which you can easily get to, and which are interesting, fun or just fattening. Call the New London Chamber of Commerce for further information.

- \*The Dutch Tavern-263 Green Street
- \*The Bird's Eye Tavern- 187 Jefferson Ave.
- \*Fun Center I- downtown N.L.
- \*Fun Center II- Groton
- \*Ocean Beach Arcade
- \*Michael's Dairy - 629 Montauk Ave.
- \*Steve's Curiosity Shop - Bank St.
- \*Patsy's Grocery Store - 377 Bank St.
- \*B.F. Clydes Cider Mill - Mystic, North Stonington Rd.
- \*Fred's Shanty - 272 Pequot
- \*Norm's Diner- Groton, 17 Bridge St.

## Anderson's Junk Yard-Junk Cars

We are the somnolent derelicts,

our dull, rusting, deformed hulks

stacked in awry

behind the steel mesh fence.

Our accident-crushed bodies were death for some.

Our rotting back seats were life for others.

We've piously brought the straight-backed Deacons to mass, and crookedly brought laughing, squint eyed partyers home.

We've sped thieves from robbery's, young lovers home before curfew, arson's from fires and just awakened short stops to ball games.

We've been shelter from rain and lightening, freedom to the shut ins and brother to the salesman.

We've carried Okies to California groves, grinning heroes through ticker tape, mothers to the store, fathers to the office, sisters to school.

We were the new bottle shiny cars with \$4,000 price tags.

Now you can look through our windshields for twenty.

We are the somnolent derelicts.

J.J.C.



# Safety Precautions

page number eleven

LINDA STAMM

The sole reason for the existence of Campus Safety patrols is not to ticket students' cars. In the past month Campus Safety has had to deal with an attempted sexual assault, ten reports of larceny, nine cases of vandalism, and four complaints of criminal mischief. Some of the specific crimes were stolen bicycles, siphoned gas, and the utter destruction of Crozier-Williams first floor Men's room during the Sept. 22 party.

There are 15 men and 2 women guards who patrol the campus. Campus Safety has the use of only one car, and most patrolling is done on foot. All guards are equipped with Walkie-Talkies. In case of serious trouble, night sticks and mace are carried in the patrol car.

The gates which control access to the campus have been absent for a year. S.G.A. has recently voted to replace them. Once all the gates are in place again every car entering campus will be checked and off campus visitors questioned.



Guests who arrive before midnight will be requested to name the people they are visiting. Anyone expecting a visitor after midnight must call Campus Safety and provide them with the names of the people they are expecting. Unknown or unexpected people will no longer be allowed on campus.

Roy Eaton Sr., Director of Campus Safety, believes the number of thefts increased while the gates were not in use. He realizes people may still have access to campus by foot, but hopes

gates will hinder thefts of larger goods (i.e. televisions, stereos).

Mr. Eaton is concerned over students' apparent carelessness for their personal and property safety. While investigating the attempted sexual assault, he took an informal poll and was shocked to discover that 8 out of 10 women had been leaving their doors unlocked all night. He urges students to lock their doors at night and whenever they are absent from their rooms. He also hopes the practice of wedging dormitory doors open after they have been locked for the night will be discontinued.

A campus safe for students and their belongings depends on student cooperation. The Campus Safety Patrols can't be everywhere at once and depends on students to report suspicious or criminal occurrences. Anyone contributing to a report need not have his name included in it. By increased awareness and contributions to Campus Safety, you will not only be helping others but helping yourself.

## Oxfam

Selden Prentice

Oxfam is a non-profit, international agency which funds self-help development programs in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

November 17th, a week before Thanksgiving, is the day Oxfam-America has chosen for a nationwide fast. At Connecticut College, and at many other Universities, students have the opportunity to fast during lunch and/or dinner. The money saved will be sent to Oxfam. But the collection of money is not the only purpose to the fast. Oxfam wants all of us to begin thinking about our habits and the way food is used and wasted in the world. Fasting is a good way to symbolize the beginning of changes in our personal and national use of food.

Oxfam believes that the use of food should not be thought of in terms of nations but rather in terms of the world as a whole. Of course, all nations

should produce as much as the earth will allow. But since food is a basic need of all individuals, ideally, it should not be used as a political weapon, nor should it be wasted in one country when people in another country are starving.

Here are some facts to consider on the day of the fast as well as afterwards:

With only 6% of the world's population, the U.S. uses between 30% and 40% of its annually consumed resources.

The present population of the world allows for approximately one acre of food-producing land per person. A meat and milk centered diet requires approximately three and one-half acres of land per person, whereas a plant protein diet needs approximately one-fifth of an acre.

The average American eats almost twice the protein her/his body can use.

Many Third World countries are economically dependent on the developed countries to purchase their cash crops (tobacco, coffee, tea) when

lands used to produce these crops could be producing food.

World Bank loans also go to the production of cash crops.

To feed the entire world with a U.S. type food system, almost 80% of the world's annual energy expenditure would be required just for the food system.

This American Agricultural system is also a polluting one in its use of fertilizers and pesticides, and is ecologically unstable in its use of monocultures.

This week a Survival member will come to your door to ask if you would like to sign up for the fast. If he/she misses you, and you'd like to sign up for the fast send your name and the name of your dorm to Box 1060. Also state whether you want to miss lunch, dinner, or both. Off campus students, faculty, and other members of the college community who would like to fast, can send the money saved to Oxfam-America, 302 Columbus Avenue, Boston, Mass., 02116.



**SUNDAY** **MONDAY** **TUESDAY** **WEDNESDAY** **THURSDAY** **FRIDAY** **SATURDAY**

PCC- Providence Civic Center  
(401-331-6700)  
NHC- New Haven Coliseum  
(772-4330)  
HCC- Hartford Civic Center  
(566-6000)